Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya

Gyatri kunj, Shanti kunj,
Hardwar (UA)

Research Topic

Novels written by women and their conversion into films by men

Submitted for the award of the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in
Journalism & Mass Communication

Superviser
Prof. Surya Kant Mishra
Senior Lecturer English Dept.
Satyavati Collage
Delhi University

Research Scholar
Ms. AVHINAV

2005

Contents

1. Significance of Research Study.

2. Literature Review.

3. Problem of Research.

4. Justification of Research Problem.

5. Objectives of Research.

6. Hypothesis.

7. Research Methodology.

8. Planning of Proposed Research Work.

9. Bibliography.

1. ***SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH STUDY***

Because film is not a facile, rhetorical metaphor...

Life is.

This world is an illusion, is 'maya'. In this world of illusion, there is cinema. It is another illusion within the existing illusion. Since film is twice removed from reality, it becomes more authentic than the planet we live on. Literature forms a part of one of the six classical arts. Cinema is the seventh art as it derives from all the existing six arts to become the sum total of all of them and more.

Men and Women are the only complete and perhaps the perfect contradiction in Nature. They are as distinct as the word and image and yet when they come together, they create meaning, beauty order and affirm Nature's opinion that life must go on.

The beginning of this study then lies somewhere in the past. The majority of writers of history, philosophy and literature have been men. So we all got used to seeing the world and reading explanations of human behavior (or psychology) from the male perspective. Male subjectivity is wrongly taken to be objective knowledge. There have been claims that what is presented "objectively" must be reliable. Virginia Woolf had once remarked on the great number of books written by men about women. Women writers sought to undermine and replace the present rigid system of gender identity with a new way of women knowing themselves and the world. These writers felt that they must be liberated from thinking of themselves as men think of themselves as men think of them and often conceiving self-contempt. By using positive images of female qualities, there is an attempt to raise women's self-esteem, even to subvert patriarchal meanings. The male use of stereotyping women objects was to be understood and changed.

A woman's world is something that concerns me, fascinates me, fills me with angst at times and at times awes me. I am a woman, I comprise half of the human race. Needless to say, that the way a woman looked or continues to look at the world is very much

through patriarchal stereotypes. It is not because she has limited and confined parameters in her vision but because the male point of view and interpretation had completely permeated every aspect of the world view. It was not only the final yardstick but the penultimate of any human understanding of any kind of art.

The spirit of the word and the spirit of the image are not necessarily in conflict because they are polar opposites. In fact, they reinforce each other, enhance and enrich the meaning and existence of one another. Just like the word is impregnated with the promise of the image, similarly, the image can give raise a dust of innumerable meanings.

Do we always think in words or in images? Are all our thought processes confined to the visuals around us or inside our minds or do we often think in our first language acquisition?

These plethora of questions somehow fall into a definite pattern when one begins to get inquisitive about the world of women. Did they always perceive the world like their male counterparts did they break open the shackles and wrote down with their imagery? It must have been a significant struggle because their defying of conventions must have begun at several levels. Several layers of questioning on the political, social, economic, psychological must have occurred. The struggle to create their own idiom and imagery led to several oppressions at all levels. Women were not allowed vote in the Greek city states, Chinese history seldom mentions a woman's role in the stately or administrative affairs, the Suffragette movement in England was not an easy one. Women in The United States start voting only in the 1920s. There are several dimensions to a woman's writing. She writes, because she wants to communicate with herself, while she writes, the lucidity of her writing introduces her to her own self. The word is no longer a black imprint on a sheet of paper. It is her discovery, her discovery of freedom to creativity. She writes because she not only wants to express but also somewhere along the way wants to identify herself with all the women around her. If women write with words and give birth to human characters with alphabets, the destinies of their characters is in their hands. They are the mistresses of the fates of the protagonist and the other people existing in the book. After she has written the book, a male director, either a contemporary or say,

several decades later takes fascination to the book, decides to make a film o the book. It is not only him but also the producer who is equally fascinated by the book, decides to buy the film rights of the book and go ahead with the cinematic execution of the novel. The screen play, the cinematography, the viewfinder is all handled by men. The film is finally the male director's vision.

When the conversion of films from books written by women occurs, what is lost and what is gained? Can something be added to the book when it is made into a film? Is something subtracted from the book when a male director picks a woman's novel and decides to make film out of it?

When a man truly begins to understand a woman's world, he will not remain a man anymore. He will come closer to Nature and get acquainted with the real essence of sensitivity and equality.

---

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The available novels written by women writers and made into films by men have been categorized into three categories.

The first category will include Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility. Pearl Buck's The Good Earth, Anita Desai's In Custody, Daphne du Maurier's Rebecca, Alice Walker's The Color Purple & Mala Sen's Bandit Queen.

It will also include the other written works of Jane Austen like Pride and Prejudice Anita Desai's other works, Daphne du Maurier's criticisms, Pearl Buck's Peony and her memoirs of China and her account of the Chinese civilian lives, Mala Sen's prison diaries on the Bandit Queen and Alice Walker's other works and correspondence.

The other reference materials sought will be Gayatri Spivak's and Gauri Vishwanathan books on women writings. The Location of Culture and Nation and Narration by Homi . K Bhabha

The second category contains the novels in which the lives of the single women have been described. In these books, "India's Bandit Queen - The true story of Phoolan Devi" by Mala Sen , "In Custody" by Anita Das & " The Color Purple" by Alice Walker are the most one.

The third category contains the oeuvre of the male filmmakers and their comparison will be done in terms of screen play and narrative compared tot he film like for example say Shekhar Kapur's interpretation of the book and later the conversion into film will be compared with his latter work say, Elizabeth

But the answers of the questions like - Is the very life of the book transformed when it becomes a spectacle for the masses? From the quiet reader to a collective public response is the journey worthwhile? Is the whole effort worth it, if the spirit of the word and the core of the novel are not retained? We have not found as yet. Because of that a deep investigation or research must be required.

3. PROBLEM OF RESEARCH

Since language is "man-made" "gender" is actually a social and not a biological construct, an alternative it is social identity to find women an alternative space outside man's world.

This study attempts to travel a little further and embark on a journey that aims to understand the interpretation of men of a woman's universe of writing and then later converting them into films for the audiences. When this occurs, does the paradigm shift also affect the readers and the audiences? When men interpret the world of women and transport them on to the giant commercial screen, is there a profound transition? Art has responsibilities. A book has a moral and a social responsibility. Film also has a social responsibility. It is not just about raising questions but also about finding answers. At the end of it, perhaps there are no winners and losers. Everyone is a victim.

Another important realm of thought to be probed is that there are levels of interpretation too. One is on the level of perception, cognition, emotional and behavioral. A woman's way of assimilating and expressing a particular emotion is radically and fundamentally different from a male's experience of any emotion. Women, express best when they write. The pen becomes her powerful weapon and medium in her relationship with the world.

The novels chosen in this study are all a depiction of the characters themselves and how the world sees them. There is an attempt by these characters trying to actualize themselves and eventually becoming full human beings capable of deeper and more complete experience of an insight of life. The study aims to discuss the various planes and parts of human being in q society, the sufferings and limitations, the potentialities and possibilities as well as the problem of being a human being in the first place. When women writers have penned down these thoughts, what must have fascinated the male filmmaker to pick these novels and create films out of them. Is, it the forbidden sensibility? Is the very life of the, book transformed when it becomes a spectacle for the masses? From the quiet reader to a collective public viewing- is the journey worthwhile? Is the whole effort worth it, if the spirit of the word and the core of the novel are not

retained? Or is it like the proverbial Midas touch that whatever writings men touch and transform, it ultimately begins to look like them, takes on their color, their perspective? Or when films are made by man, based on novels written by women is there a most obvious strategy working that often are a reflection of the insecurities men feel in their relations with women as well as with controlling the world.

4. JUSTIFICATION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

By the deep review and investigation of available literature on the novels written by women on which film have been made by men film makers and the interpretation of the different dimensions of significance of research problem, there is a strong possibility for the originality and justification of this study. Due to this research a new dimension will be developed in the English literature.

5. OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH

To be able to grasp this awareness is the aim of this study. To add resonance and ponder about what the future holds is also on the periphery.

The first chapter is the introduction of the history of writing by women. The desperation, the determinism, the freewill, the cry for an independent identity is revealed here. The history of film will also be studied here.

The second chapter is on women novelists, Jane Austen and Daphne du Maurier's .The Austenian world is full of the flotsam and jetsam of the British society. Jane Austen wrote Sense and Sensibility when England was away fighting wars. This chapter will try to understand whether Ang Lee, the film director of Sense and Sensibility has done justice to the events and characters depicted in the novel.

Alfred Hitchcock's genre of direction lay in the suspense and eerie elements. Rebecca written by Daphne du Maurier is about the loneliness and timidity of a girl who later as her life takes on anew course, goes on to battle with her own fears. The narrator finds everything in her life larger than herself. Whether it is her companionship to her previous mistress or her new home, her new position as the lady of the house, her clothes that ill fit

her, or the formidable nature around her mansion; everything around seems to dwarf her. The study here aims to understand whether Hitchcock has managed to understand the loneliness and isolation of a woman terribly in love with her husband or does it all disappear in his' suspense' style of film making. The third chapter is about the American novel, The Color Purple by Alice Walker and Pearl.s. Buck's The Good Earth. The Color Purple is a celebration of the spirit of black women which is truly infectious because it is not just about the black women but also about womankind on a whole. The characters can be identified by all women of this world. It also reveals tribal sensuality set against urban dehumanization. The film possesses a prophetic insight and at the deepest level is about culture in conflict with itself. Steven Spielberg is a good Hollywood director with renowned international standard did the cinematic presentation of this film. There is an attempt to know how the director of E. T., Artificial Intelligence, Jurassic Park and generally associated with science fiction, portrays this human document.

Pearl S. Buck's The Good Earth was made into a film by Sidney Franklin. The book is set in China, when the times were rife with political trouble and as a nation, China was going through an influx phase. The novel is undoubtedly a metaphor for the central character in this book. The book is replete with symbolic elements and throws light on the status of women in China at the turn of the century. Both the book and the film need to be assimilated and the idea is to judge whether the film maker has been capable of conveying the pathos and the looming sadness of this good mother.

The fourth chapter is about the Indian women writers and the novels to be studied are Anita Desai's In Custody and Mala sen's India's Bandit Queen. Anita Desai's In Custody was made into a film by Ismail Merchant (of the famous Merchant Ivory duo) and the title was turned into an Urdu one- Muhafiz. Muhafiz or In Custody is an attempt to view whether Ismail Merchant manages to absorb and execute the wry humor, the arid landscape so evocatively described in the book and overall the idiosyncrasies of the characters in the book. Anita Desai's book is capable of showing stark suffering in a lighter vein though, by economic exploitation.

India's Bandit Queen based on the notorious female bandit, Phoolan devi's life was

directed by Shekhar Kapur, who interestingly also made another woman-centric film, Elizabeth. He has directed two Queens but of different stature. Their circumstances made them queens- the former, an infamous one of the ravines of Chambal and another of a blue-blooded, royal lineage, from the palace itself. Does the director possess panache in entering the minds of women and revealing the psyche behind their acti9ns? This chapter weighs both the books and the directors in question.

Chapter Six is again a comparative study of novels written by women and films consecutively made by men. The complexities, the technicalities and the literary and cultural elements will be studied again.

Chapter Seven will have interviews with writers, academicians, film historians and writers. Their opinions will help to enhance the quality of this work.

Chapter Eight is the final tying up and a sincere effort to see that there are no loose ends left. There is also a hope that this body of work will open other enormous avenues of thought processes, unlock other universes and that the tapestry woven will be embellished further.

6. HYPOTHESIS

1. There is a great difference between the thinking of women and men about the women.
2. There is a great difference between the women and men about the feelings of women.
3. Is the interpretation and picturization of the women personality by men on the basis of novels written by women truly real?

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

This research methodology will be completed in three steps.

1. Collection of Research material from different resources

2. On the basis of the available novels and film made on these novels the different dimensions about the men's interpretation of the women's feelings thoughts etc. will be analyzed.

3. In the form of conclusion of the analysis the different theories and the process will be interpreted.

PLANNING OF PROPOSED RESEARCH WORK

CHAPTER 1

Introduction:

- History of novels written by women. -History of film.
- Introduction of Conversion of novels written by women turned into films by men and the changes that take place. The study of one art i.e., women's writings interpreted by another art-that of films made by men.

CHAPTER 2

Women writers like Jane Austen's Sense and Sensibility made into a film by Ang Lee and Daphne du Maurier's Rebecca turned into a cinematic presentation by Alfred Hitchcock.

The changes that occur in

- Characters
- Theme
- Aspects- social, moral, ethical
- Effect of place and spirit

CHAPTER 3

Alice Walker's The Color Purple made into a film by Steven Spielberg and Pearl S. Buck's The Good Earth converted into a film by Victor Fleming.

The changes that occur in

- The characters -the theme

- Aspects- social, moral, spiritual, the colors black and purple and the universe that is a combination of both the colors

- Effect of place, of the landscape and spirit.

CHAPTER 4

Indian women writers like Anita Desai's In Custody made into a film by Ismail Merchant and Mala sen's Bandit Queen interpreted on the celluloid by Shekhar Kapur.

The changes that occur in

- The characters

- The theme

- Aspects- social, economical, moral, geographical

- Effect of place and spirit.

CHAPTER 5

A Comparative Study of Novels converted into films –the technical, literary and cultural elements.

CHAPTER 6

Interviews

CHAPTER 7

Summing up

---

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Alcock, Peter: Rope, Serpant, Fire: Anila Desai's fiction. Pg. 159-168 in the Indian novel in English: Evaluations . Edited by t. Prabhakar. Publisher - New Delhi: Phoenix, 1995.
2. Alice Walder by Winchell, Dinna Haisty. Publisher - New York: Jwayne Publishers. Taxwell Macmillian Institute 1992.
3. Alice Walker: Critical Perspectives Past & Present. Publisher New York: Amisvad: Distributed by Penguin USA, 1993.
4. Author - Phoolan Devi. Title: I, Phoolan Devi: The autobigraphy of India's Bandit Queen - Wim Marie - Thinese Cuny and Paul Rambali. Publisher - London: Little, Brown & Co, 1996.
5. Belliappa, Meena, Anila Desai: A Study of Her tiction. Caluctta: Writer's Workhop 1971.
6. Block, Iscin. Title: The Lives of Peasl Buck: A Tale of China and America. Publisher - New York, Crowell, 1973.
7. Boyum, Joyguld 1934. Title: Double Exposure: fiction into film. Publisher - Calcutta India: Seagull Books, 1989, 1985.
8. Brown, Julia Prewitt: Jane Austen novels: Social change and literasy form. Publisher - Combridge: Harvars University Press, c 1979.
9. Chapman, R W: Jane Austen: Facts and Problems. Publisher Oxford: Oxford Clarendon Press, 1950.
10. Christion, Barbara. Black women Novels: The Development of a Tradition. Publisher - westpost, Connecticut. gieenwood Press, 1980.
11. Christion, Barbara. Jiha: Black women Writers. Publisher - New York: Perganon Press, c1985.
12. Connos, Kimberley Rao. Title: Converssions and vision in the writings of African-American women. Publisher - Knox ville: University of Iennessee. Press, 1994.
13. Cornish, Franics Wame: Jane Austen. Publisher - London: Macmillian, 1929.
14. Craik, WA: Jane Austen: The six novels. Publisher-London: Methuen, 1966.
15. Craik, WA: Jane Austen In her Time. Publisher - London: Thoman Nelson & Sons, c1969.

16. Daphne Du Maurier - A Daughters Memoir By Tlaria Leng.
17. Daphne Du Maurier - Writing, Identity and the Sothic Imagination. By Avril Hornar & Sue Zlosnik.
18. Daphne Du Maurier By Margaret Torster.
19. Doyse, Paul A: Pearl S. Buck. Publisher - Bombay: Popular, c1965.
20. Gao, Xiongya, 1955. Title: Peasl's. Buck's Chinese coomen charecter. Publisher - Selinsgrore: Surquehanna. Associates University Press; London, c2000.
21. Ghosh, Shohini: Deviant Pleasures and disorderly women: The representation of the female outlaw in Bandit Queen and Anjaam. Pg. 150-183 in feminist Jerrains in legal domains: interdisciplinary essays an women and law in India. Edited by Ratna Kapur. Publisher - New Delhi: Kali for women, 1996.
22. Jain, Jasbir - Staiss to the Attic: The Novels of Anila Desai. Jaipur: Printwell, 1987.
23. Jane Austen: A Colleclion of Certical Essays Edited by Ian Watt. Publisher - New Jersey: Pentice Hall, 1964.
24. Jane Austen in a Social context. Edived by Darid Monaghan. Publisher - London: Macmillian Press, c1981.
25. Lascelles, Mary: Jane Austen and her Art. Publisher - London: OUP, 1958.
26. Lemer, Laurence: The Truth tellers: Jane Austen, George Elliot, Dh Lawrence. Publisher - London Chalto and Windus, 1967.
27. Liddell, Robert: The Novels of Jane Austen / London: Longmans, Green c 1963.
28. Mayne, Indith. Title: Private novels, Public films. Publisher- Georgia Press, o1988.
29. Mckelvie , Martha groves: gerns of the good Earth. Publisher - Philadelphia: Franklin, c1973.
30. MOorthy, K. S. R.: The Indian women Novelits writing in English. Publisher - LIcritt, Jume 1978.
31. Mss. De Winter By Susan Hill.
32. Mukherjee, Teenakshi: The Tovice Born Tiction: Themes and Techniques of Indian novel in English. Publisher - Delhi.
33. Pearl S. Buek: Good Earth Mother By Warren Shesk. A Poleword By Julie Nixon Eisenhower, c1990.

34. Pearl S. Buek: A Cultural Bridge Across the Pacific. By Kang Liao. Publisher - Westport, Connecticut: Qreenwoos Press, 1997.
35. Pearl S. Buek: A women In Lonblict. By Nora Stirling. Publisher - Piscataway, Newjersey, New Century Publishers, c1983.
36. Pinion, FB: A Jane Austen Companion: A Critical Survey and reference book. Publisher- London: Macmillian, c 1973.
37. Prasd, Madnusudan, Anila Desai: The Navelist. Allahabad: New Holizon, 1981.
38. Qriffith, Tames John 1957. Title: Adaptations as Imitations: films Fromnovels. Publisher - Newyork: University of Delaware Press; London: Cranlomy, Newjersey Associates University Presser, c1997.
39. Rao B. Ramachandra. The Novels of Anila Desai: Kalyani Publishers: New Delhi, 1977.
40. Reddy T Vasudera: Jane Austen: The Matrix of Matrimony. Publisher - Jaipur: Bohra, c 1987.
41. Roucier Nathalic Roucier Claudie Landy Nathalie and Landy, Claudie: Alter 48 hours of women's films in La Rocelle. Pg. 204-206 in New Lench leminisms, An Anthology edited by Elaine Marks, Isabelle. Publisher - New York: choken books, 1981.
42. Seger, Linda. Title: The Art of Adapatation: Taming Taet & fiction into film. Publisher - New York: Holt, 1992.
43. Sherry, Norman: Jane Austen. Publisher-Newyork: ARCO, c 1969.
44. Shirwadkar, Meena, Image of women in the Indo - Anglican novel. Stesling Publishers Limited: 1979.
45. Spencer Jane: The Rise of the Women Norelist from Aphra Behn to Jane Austen. Publisher - Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987.
46. Sreeres, Harrison R: Before Jane Austen: The Shaping of the English novel in the 18th century.
47. Srivastava Kamlesh K. Perspectives on Anila Desai. ghaziabad: Vimal, 1984.
48. The African - American Century: How Blanck American have shapes our country. Henry houis gates Is and Cornel west. Publisher - New York: Tree Press, c2000.
49. The Beacon Book of Essays by contempolary American women. Publisher -Boston,

Beacon Press, 1996.

50. The Novels of Anila Desai. - Usha Bande.
51. The Private World of Daphne du Maurier By Martin Shallcross.
52. Tibbers, John C. Title: The Encyclopedia of Novels into films. Publisher - New York: facts on file, 1998.